

by, they remember expecting that they would not survive. They had no guarantees, but they went on against gunfire, under shelling, over land mines. Against all, they plowed ahead. And they knew that unless they prevailed, our very way of life might be lost.

The sacrifices of their yesterdays have given us the promise of freedom in our tomorrows. A grateful nation must never forget that. It is our obligation to make a world in which no D-Day will ever be necessary again. Working together, with American leadership, we can do that. We can resist tyranny. We can combat terrorism and contain chaos. We can work for peace, for progress, for human rights. The sacrifices of those who went before us demand no less. Like the soldiers who fought on D-Day and in Italy, our great Nation must always push onward to see our freedom endure. For when our memories exceed our dreams, we have begun to grow old. And it is the destiny and the obligation of America to remain forever young.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: This address was recorded at 4:41 p.m. on May 27 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 28.

### **Remarks at a Memorial Day Breakfast**

*May 30, 1994*

Thank you very much. Thank you, Hershel, for that kind of introduction and for the good work that you do for our veterans every day. Secretary Perry, Postmaster General Runyon, General Shalikashvili and the chiefs of our military services, General Gordon at the Military District here in Washington, to the other distinguished guests who are here. Let me welcome you here for another happy and honorable Memorial Day.

I'd like to begin, if I might, by asking one person here to stand and be acknowledged. I want to say a special word of thanks to General Mick Kicklighter and the World War II Commemoration Committee for the remarkable work they have done in organizing this commemoration and what we are about to do in the coming week. General, please stand up. *[Applause]* Thank you.

In just a few moments, I will sign two proclamations, one a prayer for peace on Memorial Day and the other the declaration of D-Day National Remembrance Day. Before I do that and before Postmaster General Runyon unveils this year's additions to the World War II commemorative stamps, I'd like to say just a word about this occasion.

Fifty years ago, our Nation and our allies were engaged in a monumental struggle, the outcome of which was far from clear for quite a long while. Americans from all walks of life were called far from their homes and their families. Franklin Roosevelt spoke of their mission on the morning of the 6th of June, D-Day: "Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity. They fight not for the lust of conquest, they fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise and tolerance and goodwill among all God's people."

Today, we enjoy the fruits of that toil. We owe our liberty and our prosperity to the strength and the valor of those who fought in that great struggle. But we also inherit the responsibility of defending that gift. We must be the guardians of the freedom that was delivered to us today by what we do here at home to keep freedom alive and to enhance its meaning.

And around the world our men and women in uniform stand guard, guaranteeing and defending that freedom. I think the veterans of D-Day and World War II who are here must take a great deal of pride in knowing that today's men and women in uniform are the finest, most well-motivated Armed Forces our Nation or any nation has ever known. Our highest commitment must be to ensure that they remain so, best trained, best equipped, best prepared. If they must be in harm's way, they must have the support they need and deserve.

As we observe the 50th anniversary of World War II, we must also pause to remember and to pay tribute to those who did not come home, to honor them for the ultimate sacrifice, to honor their families, their friends, those who love them. Also, we must honor those who are here and those they rep-

resent who did come home after service in World War II and all those who have guarded our security since. Our Nation is in your debt. We will never forget your valor, your sacrifices, the daily lives that you have made possible.

Let me say, too, a special word of appreciation to those of you who came through the line today who told me that you, too, were going back to Europe this week to be part of that celebration. I hope when you go back, you will feel the immense pride and gratitude that all Americans feel for the sacrifice you made, the commitment you made, and for all the days you made possible in the 50 years since. And I hope everyone else who is here being honored today will also share in some of that pride. We sometimes forget that no democracy in human history has ever lasted as long as the United States of America. It is easy to forget that. It is easy to forget it, but if you measure against all the recorded history of civilization, every day we have is a miracle, a miracle that you made possible, and we thank you for it.

I'm going to sign the proclamations, and then Mr. Gober and Mr. Runyon are in charge of the rest of the program.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Hershel Gober.

### **Proclamation 6696—Prayer For Peace, Memorial Day, 1994**

*May 30, 1994*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Each year as summer approaches, we pause to honor the memory of those who died in service to our Nation. Even though the Cold War is over, there are still reminders—past and present—that the price of peace can be very dear indeed. One reminder, engraved in the stone memorial at the Omaha Beach Cemetery, eloquently states, “To these we owe our highest resolve, that the cause for which they died, shall live.” Whether at Valley Forge or in the skies above

Iraq, this tribute poignantly expresses the gratitude felt by all Americans as we remember the men and women in uniform who made the supreme sacrifice.

Each year, on the last Monday in May, we pause to pray for peace and to pay homage to those who have died defending our liberties, service men and women from all generations and from all wars. But this year, Memorial Day especially recalls those Americans who helped change the course of history and helped preserve a world in which the ideals of freedom and individual rights could flourish. One week from today, on June 6, we will observe the 50th Anniversary of D-Day. On that day in 1944, the world witnessed perhaps the greatest military action in history—and the beginning of the end of Nazi Germany's stranglehold on Europe.

The passage of 50 years has seen the birth of new generations of Americans who know of D-Day only from their history lessons. Fifty years may have dimmed the memories of some who were alive during World War II, but we need only look at those “reminders” of the price of freedom to understand what happened on that day 50 years ago.

Anzio, Utah Beach, Omaha Beach, Pointe du Hoc, and Normandy—each is an unforgettable chapter in our Nation's history. Each is a name that invokes memories of patriotism and valor, of teamwork and sacrifice.

Each reminds us that our Nation was founded on the belief that our democratic ideals are worth fighting for and, if necessary, worth dying for. We have a sacred obligation to remember for all time the names and the deeds of the Americans who paid that price for all of us.

In respect and recognition of those courageous men and women to whom we pay tribute today, the Congress, by joint resolution of May 11, 1950 (64 Stat. 158), has requested the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe each Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace and designating a period on that day when the people of the United States might unite in prayer.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Memorial Day, May 30, 1994, as a day of prayer for permanent peace,